

Recidivism

A 2001 study conducted by the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly analyzed the 4,006 felony inmate discharges from the Connecticut Department of Correction, which occurred during 1997.

Of this group, 90% were male and 74% were minorities with 45% African American, 28% Hispanic and 1% American Indian or Asian. The racial breakdown was consistent among male and female inmates. The inmates ranged in age from 16 to 74 years with an average age of 31.

After three years, 69% were rearrested at least once for a new felony, 46% were subsequently re-convicted, 22% were re-incarcerated and 18% received a non-prison sentence of probation supervision, an alternative sanction or a fine.

A separate study, conducted through the Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies at Brown University and the Schneider Institute for Health Policy, Heller School at Brandeis University, studied the effects of substance abuse treatment on released offenders. This evaluation sampled inmates who were released between 1996 and 1997 with a sub-sample of 1,463 selected for intensive data collection. The study found that inmates who had attended the Department of Correction's Tier Substance Abuse Treatment Program were significantly less likely to be rearrested, with 32.5% who attended the Tier Program re-arrested within one year of release compared to 45.9% who did not attend the program. There was a linear relationship between the intensity of the program and the benefits of treatment. While 46% of inmates who completed Tier One, a basics six-session substance abuse program, were re-arrested within one year, only 17% of inmates who attended Tier Four, a six-month residential therapeutic community, were re-arrested. The study also found that attending the Tier Program significantly reduced the severity of crimes committed.

While not scientific, nor of a long duration, a March 2005 review of the graduates from the faith based Chrysalis program at the York Correctional Institution for women, shows promising results for those offenders who discharge after graduating. The program, which embraces all religious beliefs in an atmosphere which encourages faith and commitment to production lifestyles, found that of 75 offenders who had completed the program since its inception in May 2003, only two of those released have returned to prison with new charges.